

Subject: FW: RecycLA -- Government Overreach
From: Rena Leddy <rena@fashiondistrict.org>
Date: 01/09/2018 01:32 PM
To: 'Andrew Thomas' <andrew@thewestwoodvillage.com>

From: Gary Toeppen [mailto:laareachamber@lachamber.com]
Sent: Tuesday, January 09, 2018 1:19 PM
To: Rena Leddy <rena@fashiondistrict.org>
Subject: RecycLA -- Government Overreach

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Tuesday | Jan. 9, 2018



RecycLA -- Government Overreach

Five years ago, I wrote a Business Perspective entitled "[A Trash Proposal That Stinks](#)," warning that a vote the L.A. City Council was about to take to implement a complete overhaul of the waste haul system for commercial and multi-family facilities would have many negative consequences and be very expensive for businesses. The business community argued that the City could achieve all its waste reduction and recycling goals through a non-exclusive franchise system, developing a set of standards that all haulers would need to meet in order to operate in L.A.

Instead the City moved forward with an exclusive franchise system, setting the stage for the problems that businesses and property owners are experiencing today. These problems are reported in an extensive column by Steve Lopez in the Los Angeles Times on Thursday, Jan. 3 titled "[L.A. trash customers say pickup deal stinks](#)."

While well intentioned, the RecycLA program created 11 geographical monopolies and severed long-term relationships between customers and trash haulers by inserting a new city bureaucracy as the middle-man. With multiple new City mandates on haulers, trash bills have shot up all over town, often by more than 100 percent. One needs to look no further than the letters to the editor section of our local papers to find stories of new fees, increased bin costs and missed pick-ups.

A non-exclusive system with solid criteria to improve the environment, increase recycling rates and reduce waste would have avoided the current challenges. But, the City used the selection process to add a host of new regulations and requirements that heaped large new costs on trash haulers. It also required the city to create a new bureaucracy with approximately 100 new City staff.

I appreciate the task the Bureau of Sanitation is charged with and their efforts to engage business owners and property representatives. I also recognize that haulers have to create thousands of new relationships while developing ways to recover the costs of new equipment, increased labor costs and \$35 million in new City franchise fees.

This new program is a classic example of government overreach. Until it was implemented, I never heard one complaint about commercial trash service from a customer. Today there are hundreds, perhaps thousands of complaints.

A month ago, Councilmembers Bonin and O'Farrell introduced a motion calling on the Sanitation Department to report on ways to improve the program and lower fees. I urge commercial customers to continue reporting their problems and I encourage the City Council and Department of Public Works to reduce costs and improve services for the businesses and residents of L.A. Unfortunately, this never should have happened in the first place.

And that's *The Business Perspective*.



The Business Perspective is a weekly column by Gary Toebben, President & CEO of the Los Angeles Area Chamber of Commerce, produced with the input of Public Policy staff.



The Los Angeles Area Chamber of Commerce is the voice of business in L.A. County. Founded in 1888, the Chamber promotes a prosperous economy and quality of life in the Los Angeles region. For more information, visit lachamber.com.

L.A. Area Chamber, 350 S. Bixel St., Los Angeles, CA 90017

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